

**COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
**(Standing Committee of Berkeley County)**

Chairman: Mrs. Judy C. Mims, District No. 6

Members: Mr. Milton Farley, District No. 1  
Mrs. Judith K. Spooner, District No. 2  
Mr. William E. Crosby, District No. 3  
Mr. Charles E. Davis, District No. 4  
Mr. Steve M. Vaughn, District No. 5  
Mr. Caldwell Pinckney, Jr., District No. 7  
Mr. Henry L. Richardson, Jr. District No. 8  
Mr. James H. Rozier, Supervisor ex officio

The COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES, Standing Committee of Berkeley County Council, met on Monday, June 11, 2001, in the Assembly Room, Berkeley County Office Building, 223 North Live Oak Drive, Moncks Corner, South Carolina, at 7:14 p.m.

PRESENT: Mrs. Judy C. Mims, Councilmember District No. 6, Chairman; Mr. Milton Farley, Councilmember District No. 1; Mrs. Judith K. Spooner, Councilmember District No. 2; Mr. William E. Crosby, Councilmember District No. 3; Mr. Charles E. Davis, Councilmember District No. 4; Mr. Steve M. Vaughn, Councilmember District No. 5; Mr. Henry L. Richardson, Jr., Councilmember District No. 8; Mr. James H. Rozier, Jr., Supervisor, ex-officio; and Mr. Rich Lingenfelter, Deputy County Attorney. Mr. Caldwell Pinckney, Jr., Councilmember District No. 7, was excused from this Committee meeting.

The requirements of the Freedom of Information Act have been complied with by posting the time, date, place and copy of Agenda of this Committee meeting of Berkeley County Council at the entrance to the Berkeley County Office Building, 223 N. Live Oak Drive, Moncks Corner, South Carolina, and a copy of such notice was mailed to all Councilmembers and the News media.

Chairman Mims called the meeting to order and stated that first item on the agenda was Mr. Allen R. Roberts, Berkeley County Veteran's Affairs Service Officer; however, Mr. Roberts had asked to appear on next month's agenda.

Next on the agenda was Presentation by Mr. Alvin E. Burch, Executive Director of Burch Community Trade Center.

Mr. Burch stated the Burch Community Trade Center is a Job Skills Training Facility located in North Charleston, which is a 5013C non-profit organization, and he was here to ask for a letter of support. He stated they recently received a franchise to build affordable housing, which consists of metal framing. However, they are able to do conventional siding, brick, wood, vinyl, able to lower the cost and still produce a quality product from \$40 to \$50 a square foot. Their Job Skills Training Facility actually addresses at risk men and women. The program is designed for a year and 16 weeks where they actually prepare at risk men and women with

marketable job skills, teach them GED courses, light skills, attitude and welding. Mr. Burch stated they have formed a partnership with different entities in their community and the individuals are sent out on a 12 months apprenticeship program. The individuals have done quite well. They started in 1996 and Channel 5 aired four segments of the program, which was a success. He stated they are really fortunate to receive the franchise for affordable housing, which is a great issue. Mr. Burch stated they would like to be supportive in the Tri-County Area. He stated these are quality homes and they hope to produce about 250 jobs per year. These individuals would have marketable job skills and could support families. The school system is looking at their program for the next school term as far as teaching the young people that have not graduated with a diploma but came out with a certificate. Mr. Burch stated they have already received a letter of support from North Charleston City Hall, the City of Charleston, and they have demonstrated some of the products the homes consist of. They have a Bank Consortium that would loan first time buyers monies for a down payment. If they maintain the homes for three years the down payment of the loan becomes a grant and would not be repayable. With the high cost of building, they are only concentrating on affordable housing; they are not competing with the open market. Their concern is citizens without a home or individuals who are interested in buying for the first time. Mr. Burch stated the market value of building is from \$87 to \$150 per square foot. So, they are really excited about affordable housing at \$50 per square foot.

Councilmember Crosby asked where were they presently building? Mr. Burch stated they are in the process of building a plant on Reynolds Avenue and Meeting Street Road. The plant consists of 13,000 square feet, clean environment, and no hazards. He stated they also proposed to build in Berkeley County in the near future because it would eliminate the cost of having to transport products from one place to the other. Councilmember Crosby asked where were they actually building homes at this time? Mr. Burch stated they have contracts to build a new house in North Park Village. Those people are waiting for their Ross Grant; once the grant is available, then construction would begin on 1,066 square foot house, which is being built at \$40.15 per square foot. He stated the trainees would actually build the houses, which is a great concept.

Chairman Mims asked who are at risk individuals? Mr. Burch stated these are young people who have no marketable job skills; immediately, that puts them at risk. He stated they want to create marketability, train them to maintain a job, how to get to the job; they address the whole person.

Councilmember Richardson asked who provides the property? Mr. Burch stated that is two-fold. They look for vacant properties and they are also petitioning the counties to give them dilapidated houses, which depletes the chance for crack houses. These houses could be torn down and replaced with affordable homes.

Councilmember Spooner asked why did they need a letter of support. Mr. Burch stated they are soliciting the support of the Tri-County Area, which would enable them to be stronger. Councilmember Spooner stated her suggestion would be for them to take this as information and decide on this when they feel comfortable in making a recommendation. Mr. Burch asked what

should he prepare for them to help in their decision? Councilmember Spooner stated some illustrations of what has been done would be sufficient.

Councilmember Richardson stated he would make motion to render the letter of support because this is something that would benefit the community, our children and our county. He asked were there similar programs? Mr. Burch stated very close, such as Youth Build. Once the Youth Build Program is completed they actually take them, prepare them with a GED, light and marketable skills. Mr. Burch passed out brochures to the Committee at this time.

Councilmember Richardson stated it appears that the process is similar to the Habitat homes. Mr. Burch stated the process is similar except they get the young people in training involved. As a result of this, they learn welding in the plant and how to erect the homes on the sites. Councilmember Spooner asked was the emphasis on building the homes or training the people? Mr. Burch stated the emphasis is on both; the end results would be building the homes, the beginning is the training.

Supervisor Rozier asked was the picture on the brochure a home they built? Mr. Burch stated that home was built in North Carolina by the Jew Building System who has the franchise. Councilmember Vaughn asked would they continue to build metal buildings, or do they intend to go to wood? Mr. Burch stated they are going to stick with the metal framing; however, they would have the ability to do conventional siding, stick, brick, wood, vinyl and conventional roofing. Councilmember Vaughn asked what part would they do in the 13,000 square foot plant? Mr. Burch stated the plant would offer a training site for the young people and also, serve as storage. Councilmember Spooner asked are they located at the shipyard? Mr. Burch stated they are located parallel to the shipyard on North Carolina Avenue.

Supervisor Rozier asked do the recipients of the home pay anything? Mr. Burch stated, yes, there is a list of people that are pre-qualified but there are no affordable homes available. Supervisor Rozier asked would they actually have a loan on the house? Mr. Burch stated, yes, a loan that is already approved. He stated those funds would be used to build another house and train people.

Chairman Mims asked about the grant? Mr. Burch stated that once the recipient moves in the house they would have to go through a 40-hour training. For example, they are given a toolbox that fits every object in the house. When the hinges are loose on the cabinets they would be trained to use a phillip screwdriver to tighten the screw. If they maintain the house for three years, keep up the payments, then the down payment becomes a grant, they won't have to pay it back. Councilmember Richardson asked would they have a mortgage payment. Mr. Burch stated they would have a mortgage but the down payment would be a bonus for maintaining for three years.

Supervisor Rozier stated along with the letter of recommendation he would like for Mr. Burch to come back in six months to a year and give them an update on the program. Mr. Burch stated he would like to have a piece of property donated to build one of the houses for show. Mr. Burch stated they could also build on the individuals property.

Councilmember Vaughn seconded the motion.

Councilmember Crosby stated he would like to have additional information and was not prepared to vote on this item this evening.

Supervisor Rozier stated the motion and second would be to send it to Council on June 25 for final approval. He would suggest they move it through Committee tonight and allow Mr. Burch to provide him with any additional information within the next week and the Clerk's office would distribute it to the Councilmembers.

Upon call for the vote, the motion passed by voice vote of the Committee.

Next on the agenda was Ms. Colleen Carney, Director Berkeley County Library, Re: Closing of Jamestown Library: Comments by Berkeley County Library Board Member; and Mayor Roy Pipkin.

Chairman Mims stated Mr. Roy Pipkin, Mayor of Jamestown would make comments first.

Mr. Pipkin stated they received bad news about two weeks ago that the Jamestown Library would close. They called Ms. Carney and she affirmed that the library would close. He stated they live in upper Berkeley County, which is a long way from almost anything and this would really damage their kids and some of the elderly people who use the library. For example, the people in Shurlerville/Honey Hill are about 30 miles from St. Stephen. Mr. Pipkin asked was there any suggestion that Council and the Library Board could give them as to what they could do to keep the library open. He stated they would do whatever it takes to keep the library open. Probo indicated they would donate money, Martin Marietta donates about \$1,000 a year, and Hell Hole Swamp Festival and the Town would help. There are computers for the children and without them they would have no access to a computer except at school. He stated he knows the publications cost \$40 and they would like to see if there was anyway they cut down on the publications; they don't have to have 4-5 newspapers. They need bare necessities to keep their library open. Mr. Pipkin stated he would like to sit down with Ms. Carney and the others so they could work through this to come up with a solution to win. He stated Jamestown, Shulerville, HoneyHill and Alvin's children are going to lose; and he was here tonight to represent those areas. If there is anything the Board could come up with to keep the library open, the people of those areas would be willing to do whatever they can to help.

Supervisor Rozier indicated to Mr. Pipkin that Berkeley County Council does not make decisions on the library. By State law the Library Board makes those decisions; so, they would have to be addressed. Mr. Pipkin reiterated that he would like to meet with the Library Board to find out what they can do to keep the library open, not how can they close it.

Councilmember Spooner stated Council was informed that the Library Board had made a decision and she had no problems with the decision they made based upon their reasons; it made

good business sense. They had debated this for some time and it's not something they decided on a whim to do. She stated the cost per book of the \$40.87 is divided by the number of publications checked out by the cost of keeping it there. So, the only way to keep the cost down is to double or triple the number of people that use the facility; and if it's going to be the same number of people using the facility, that's why the cost is there.

Mr. Pipkin stated the more people to use the facility the less the unit cost. He stated they might not need as many units that cost. Councilmember Spooner stated that's not the problem; the periodicals are going to be the same price regardless if one person or twenty people check them out. Mr. Pipkin stated they may not need as many periodicals but have the computers and reference books. For example, they could have a list of books, and if a child comes in and say, "I want to get running through the rain by John Doe", give a list to the staff and by next week they can have the book there. Councilmember Spooner stated she understands that everything possible was done to make the publications available. It's not a matter of the unit cost but the number of people that actually use the facility that makes the cost high. Also, it's not the books, but the staffing.

Councilmember Vaughn stated they have taken the cost of the entire library and divided it by how many books checked out. Every time someone checks a book out it cost the library \$40.87; that's expensive when you could buy the book for much less.

Mr. Pipkin asked was this a done deal or could they sit down with the Library Board and talk this over. Supervisor Rozier stated this is something the Library Board would have to answer. Council cannot direct them in what to do; Council only has the authority to approve a budget for the library, which is \$62,000 more than last year and Jamestown is still in the budget. They did not take Jamestown out of the budget but a decision to close was based on the cost of distributing material.

Ms. Colleen Carney, Director Berkeley County Library, stated there is a process for addressing the Library Board. The Board policy requires that individuals, who would like to appear on the agenda, send something in writing to the Board. The person would have an opportunity to speak; there is also a public comment section. The Board would then decide whether or not to take any action on what was presented to them.

Ms. Carney stated this was a decision made over a long period of time. For a Library Director it was the hardest thing she had ever done in her 27-years in this field, which was to recommend that a library close. The Board review had been on-going for the five years she had been here. Part of their Regular Meeting agenda is a review of the monthly statistics for all the facilities. As they reviewed those, they had noticed that over the past five years there continued to be a decline in usage at Jamestown. She stated in January she became more concerned because the usage had declined to less than 200 circulations per month and had been going on for several months. They had discussed making a decision to close the library and it was tabled to their July 17<sup>th</sup> meeting. However, she asked that the Board place it on the May agenda when several other factors impacting the decision came to light. She stated the decision was made first and foremost because of the dwindling usage. In terms of the timeframe, Octavia Gethers, Board

Representative for Jamestown, did notify some folks she knew in Jamestown and Shulerville communities in March. She also sent a letter to Mr. Henry Richardson who is the Councilman for those areas. They did not receive any public responses and they were waiting for budget news that impacted the library. She stated she received the County budget on May 23 and it was Supervisor's Rozier's recommendation to County that it would not be finalized until the end of this month.

Ms. Carney stated she went back several years and looked at Jamestown decline in circulation and they had seen a 54 percent decline since the annual report of 1993-94. The annual report showed a circulation of 4,022 items, which was mistakenly reported in the Berkeley Independent as the current year's statistic. The current year's projection is a circulation of 1,835 items; so it's clearly less than half of the usage in 1993-94. She stated she tried to compare the Jamestown Library to the St. Stephen because it is the closest in size and geographic location. Comparisons to St. Stephen over the past four annual report years, the Jamestown circulation has declined by 7 percent, the visitors by 15.8 percent. St. Stephen had increased 66 percent and the visitors had increased by 40.4 percent for the same time frame. Ms. Carney stated she had also compared the cost per circulation item for Jamestown and St. Stephen. The Jamestown cost at \$41.00 compared to the St. Stephen cost at \$9.00. Compared to the larger libraries it goes down much farther. Hanahan is around \$8.50; Moncks Corner \$3.50; and Goose Creek per circulation is down below \$2.00. That has to do with volume and per cost. A lot of the costs for all of the libraries are overhead. These are costs they cannot control such as utilities, statewide programs and mandates. The areas of their greatest expense is staffing. The State reports that libraries are paying up to 60 – 70 percent of their budget for staffing. They have had a staffing crisis in the library over the past few years when they had been operating with about 10 percent of their staffing positions opened at all times. The increases Supervisor Rozier mentioned are due to trying to increase what they are paying their staff in order to fill the vacant positions. They are experiencing a national shortage of Professional Librarians. They have down graded three professional positions to staff positions because they were not able to fill them and they needed to have people available in the library to help the public.

Ms. Carney continued that collections is a big part of the cost. They spent about \$18,400 on new library materials for Jamestown. Automation is another major portion of the cost. They had tried dropping the number of days of service per week but it is not going to change overhead significantly. It did allow them to shift some staffing hours to St. Stephen on a temporary basis until this decision was made. She stated their current 10 months projection they are showing a total of 312,576 circulations for the year; the Jamestown portion is 1,835. The cost of the Jamestown Library is high because she has made every effort to put everything into that library she could think of for the past five years. She wanted to make sure that all of the small libraries had equal access to information, equal access to computers because they were trying to increase the usage. They dropped Saturday hours a few years ago and tried opening on Thursdays. After the January Board Meeting, they condensed the service to three days per week.

Ms. Carney stated the budget she turned in to Supervisor Rozier included a \$31,000 decrease in the State-funding portion. The State was originally looking at a 15 percent budget cut; one of the responses was to require mandatory furloughs to State employees. Berkeley

County is committed to not doing that with our funding cuts from the State. That \$31,000 would come out of their book budget.

Ms. Carney stated the price range was risen because they have a new budget year starting July 1, and to transfer funds and to make sure they have the operating funds for all the other grants is they realize they have contracts that are coming due that their annual contracts would need to be canceled. Most automatic renewal contracts vendor wants 30 if not a 60 – 90 day notification of cancellation. So, the decision had to be moved up so they weren't committing funds for another year that they would not be able to recoup.

Ms. Carney stated savings received from the Jamestown closing would be: The Board's intention is to increase the hours at the St. Stephen Library, which is in high demand, particularly the Day Care Centers that would like to have morning hours at the library. They would use the existing Jamestown Staffing and transfer those hours to the St. Stephen Library. They would also transfer equipment, and along with it the maintenance and service contract to various libraries that need it. She stated they had requested about \$22,000 in small equipment that they have reduced from their budget's recommendation. Most of their computers are six years old and there are no funds or means to replace those computers. The five computers at Jamestown would be used to replace the older computers they are losing.

Ms. Carney stated they have had failed experiment with starting a library in the Cross area using volunteer staff; usage was so low that the volunteers finally gave up. The library opens on an on-call basis, but this facility is not funded through the County. She stated there are financial and legal responsibilities when operating a facility such as, OSHA requirements, ADA requirements, building security that running completely by volunteers presents some liability.

Ms. Carney stated solutions such as using volunteers were proposed. She stated the Jamestown situation is an excellent illustration of a larger problem in that it's difficult to deliver services to the entire rural area of Berkeley County. She stated had been approached by many small communities and large communities who would like to see library in their community. It's simply not cost effective to maintain that many branches. Ms. Carney stated she is convinced that they need to go back and take a look at book mobile service to Berkeley County, which was discontinued in 1986 due to lack of use and lack of cost effectiveness. This is exactly the justification the Board used for Jamestown. They can learn a lot from what other libraries are doing and improve where they stop with the book mobile, how many stops and what the schedules are. She stated had been getting estimates and a vehicle would cost approximately \$130,000 to \$150,000. They have grant monies through the State Library and it could apply community foundation grants. If the folks in Jamestown want to receive library they can solicit corporate donations to raise the money within the next year to fund the book mobile. Of course the County would be responsible for the on-going cost of staffing, gasoline, etc. She stated that she is convinced from what is spent on the overhead for a small branch like Jamestown that they could effectively run book mobile service for the entire rural Berkeley County. If they try it and it's successful they later may want to extend it. Some of the stops would include nursing homes, day care centers, etc.

Councilmember Richardson stated he initially thought the library was being closed to accommodate the budget but he has since learned that the library is in the budget. He asked were they closing Jamestown's library to transfer to St. Stephen in order to make that library larger? Ms. Carney stated that was correct. Councilmember Richardson asked how much money are they actually saving by closing the Jamestown Library? Ms. Carney stated he has not had a chance to get with Supervisor Rozier on the figures. She stated she with the savings from Jamestown she would request that they use it to purchase some new computer equipment that was cut out off the budget. She stated they are also concerned about cost they have no control over such as, utility. Their office supply budget was cut by \$6,000 and a lot of that was used to purchase copy machine paper for the public. Councilmember Richardson indicated to Ms. Carney that the overhead for the Jamestown Library was understood when the library was opened; they knew the population and was not going to be booming. So, the numbers they are coming up with is no surprise and he doesn't understand why they think the library would be better another 30 miles away. Ms. Carney stated she was not here when the library was opened in 1988. Councilmember Richardson stated library usage is going to be low in the rural areas because of the population. However, does that mean they are not be provided with that type of service and he definitely disagrees with the book mobile. Ms. Carney stated she had work at the Jamestown on numerous occasions. She stated her first concerns arose when she had worked out there several days and had not one person to come into the library. The computers are not being used everyday; they average about 10-computer usage a month. She stated she is not denying that the citizens of Jamestown deserve library service; however, they are trying to do the best they can for the entire population of Berkeley County. Ms. Carney stated the previous director of the Library told her that the Jamestown Library was never cost effective. Councilmember Richardson stated the St. Stephen Library is approximately 30 miles away and the people in Jamestown would not drive that far, instead they would come to Moncks Corner. Ms. Carney stated she also feels that the other reason for the dwindling usage is that when the folks come into Moncks Corner for grocery, etc., they preferably use the library there.

Councilmember Crosby asked was the problem mainly the State funding as well as County funding. The State is taking away \$31,000, which creates a the problem of being able to stay open for a few people; however, the justifications are all very clear. He stated he is concerned for the Jamestown Community but it is their responsibility to use the library to warrant justification for having it and apparently that's not happening. Councilmember Crosby stated he had mixed emotions on this issue.

Supervisor Rozier stated the total County Budget had an increase of \$144,048; the Library's budget is \$62,538 of it and has been increased better than any other budget in the County. In 1991, the countywide budget for the library was \$611,886 and this year's recommended budget is \$1,722,700, which is 281 percent of what it was. He stated he not saying that the library needs to stay opened but it's not because of the budget; it is in the budget. The budget for Jamestown is the same but the cost per unit had been increase because there is less usage of the library. He stated in reference to the book mobile, 39 people were using it countywide; it was not cost effective and you cannot carry computers on it. Supervisor Rozier stated he would have to do a lot of study on book mobiles before he would get involved in that again; it was a nightmare.



Mr. Curtis Bond, Chairman for Berkeley County Library, stated the Board along with Ms. Carney set and administers policies with regard to the Library System of Berkeley County. The Board meets every other month to discuss and formulate policies that would best serve all library patrons of Berkeley County concerning library issues. They met on May 15 and discussed the closing of the Jamestown Branch. He stated the Board felt that with the steady decline of usage relative to the cost that it would be best to close the Jamestown Branch and increase hours at the St. Stephen Branch. The decision was very difficult for all Board members, the most difficult decision made in his 18 months tenure as Chairman of the Library Board. He stated the Board knows and treasures a good education, ready access to educational material and would support any alternative to a freestanding building that is presently used. They recognize and understand the opposing points of view and stands ready to assist in any way it can to accommodate the residents of Jamestown. Mr. Bond stated, as the Committee has heard earlier tonight, "its usage versus cost." When a facility is not being utilized it is not in the best interest of the taxpayers. So, as a Board they felt it was best to close the Jamestown Branch.

Mr. Roy Pipkin stated he would like to request that they have the opportunity as a community to sit down with the Library Board to look at all of the alternatives. He stated that as a community stated they would look at options to keep the library open or they would have to close it. Maybe they could pay the rent; they could definitely do something about the water bill and may be able to solicit Berkeley Cooperative to pay the light bill. There are some things they may be able to do to make sure that they have explored every avenue. If the avenues come up as a dead end, they would say, "okay, it's gone."

Supervisor Rozier indicated that Mayor Pipkin's request to meet with the Library Board is reasonable and that they would give the community an opportunity to meet with them.

Councilmember Crosby reiterated to Mayor Pipkin that it was not the cost but no usage. They could raise a million dollars to keep it open but if nobody uses the library, it won't be feasible to do that.

Mayor Pipkin asked had everybody been notified that the library would close? Had they notified the children and do they know that they are in danger if they don't use the library? He suggested they look at everything.

Supervisor Rozier stated they are debating the wrong team; this needs to go to the Library Board. He stated he did not agree with the Library Board having the final decision; he thinks an elected body should have the final decision.

Councilmember Crosby moved to adjourn; seconded by Councilmember Richardson; and passed by voice vote of the Committee.

The Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

**COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES**  
**(Standing Committee of Berkeley County Council)**

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Members: Mr. Milton Farley, District No. 1  
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Mr. James H. Rozier, Jr., Supervisor, ex officio

There will be a Meeting of the COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES, Standing Committee of Berkeley County Council, on Monday June 11, 2001, in the Assembly Room, Berkeley County Office Building, 223 North Live Oak Drive, Moncks Corner, S. C., following the meeting of the Committee on Justice and Public Safety, at 6:00 p. m.

A. Mr. Allen R. Roberts, Berkeley County Veteran's Affairs Service Officer, Re: Approval of monument honoring veterans of Berkeley County.

B. Mr. Alvin Burch, Executive Director of Burch Community Trade Center, Re: Presentation.

C. Colleen Carney, Director Berkeley County Library, Re: Closing of Jamestown Library.

Comments:  
Berkeley County Library Board Member  
Mr. Roy Pipkin

June 6, 2001  
S/Barbara B. Austin  
Clerk of County Council